



Navigating the Storm

Attorneys Lewis Cohen & Lisa Bobotas Stay the Course Through Tough Legal Waters.

By Charlotte Libov

In a changing economic climate, there has been a constant in South Florida's legal community: Cohen & Bobotas. Attorney Lewis Cohen has practiced banking, business and real estate law for 32 years. In 2004, Lisa Bobotas, a former Assistant State Attorney and commercial litigator joined him, bringing her own courtroom experience and business background. In a recent conversation, they spoke about how they help their clients navigate important legal issues in a changing world.

Over the years, what kind of changes have banks had to face?

Lewis Cohen: The banking industry has faced some challenging economic times, as well as a demanding regulatory environment. In just the past five years, we've seen a considerable increase in regulations as well as changes in the way regulators examine banks and enforce those regulations.

What about changes in the real estate market?

Lisa Bobotas: When the economy began to decline and real estate values dropped, many banks were facing a crisis of problem loans in numbers they had never seen before. While the residential mortgage crisis has received the most media attention, commercial real estate has been equally effected. The challenge is to find a solution for banks and borrowers alike. We know the constraints that banks face, and the limits of what can and cannot be done, so we have to be creative in helping both sides achieve their common goals.

"Lewis and Lisa are two of the smartest and most effective lawyers with whom I've worked. Their expertise, particularly in banking law, their formidable experience and skill, and their creativity and understanding of the business needs of their clients, make Cohen & Bobotas a go-to firm for banking and business matters."

— David M. Buckner, Esq., Grossman Roth, P.A., Coral Gables, Fla.

What other challenges do your banking clients face today?


Lewis Cohen: As technology evolves, new banking services become available, particularly in the areas of electronic banking. New technology brings with it new problems and risks, which need to be evaluated and mitigated to the fullest extent possible. We've seen a significant increase in the amount of high-tech fraud. It is a challenge to create systems and procedures to counteract these threats.

What makes Cohen & Bobotas unique?

Lisa Bobotas: Our hands-on management experience and legal backgrounds allow us to bring a unique perspective and understanding of our clients' business goals and objectives. By understanding the demands and challenges of business first, we successfully apply solutions which enable our clients to overcome those demands and challenges.

What's the advantage to the client in using a boutique law firm like yours?

Lewis Cohen: We are often asked how we compete with national and global law firms, given our chosen fields. There is a trend among sophisticated clients away from large, multidisciplinary firms to smaller, more focused firms. We strongly believe the attorney client relationship should be a personal relationship, something that is too often lost in a large-scale environment. By focusing on the specific needs of the financial and business communities, we meet our clients' needs efficiently and effectively. Our clients appreciate that.



Lewis R. Cohen, a life-long resident of South Florida, has more than 32 years experience in banking, finance, regulatory compliance and commercial real estate. He is widely recognized for his experience in banking and finance law and regulation, including the Bank Secrecy Act, USA Patriot Act, Truth in Lending Act, Equal Credit Opportunity Act, Right to Financial Privacy and the law of deposits, collections and electronic funds transfers. He earned the highest rating of AV from the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory® in 1990, is listed in the Bar Registry of Preeminent Lawyers, and has been named one of South Florida's "Top Lawyers" by the South Florida Legal Guide yearly since 2005.

Lisa Bobotas began her legal career in 1994 as an Assistant State Attorney for the Broward County State Attorney's Office, trying 43 jury trials and hundreds of non-jury trials. She litigated civil and commercial cases for seven years prior to teaming up with Cohen in 2004. She earned the highest peer rating of AV by Martindale-Hubbell® in her first year of eligibility. She has been named one of South Florida's "Top Lawyers" by the South Florida Legal Guide yearly since 2008. She was certified by the Florida Supreme Court as a Certified County Court Mediator in 2009.

**Cohen & Bobotas is located
on the Internet at
www.cohenandbobotas.com**